

THE MARYLAND WILDLIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES – JUNE 12, 2002

Chairman Tim Lambert called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Approval for Minutes from May 2002 Meeting

- May meeting minutes approved without correction.

Introduction

- Mr. Bob Beyer introduced Brian Eyler, the new member of the Deer Project Team.

WHS Natural Heritage Program Report

- Presentation by Associate Director Glenn Therres
- Mission:
 - 1) Conservation of rare, threatened, endangered, and non-game plants and animals.
- History:
 - 1) Started in 1980.
 - 2) Active in all 50 states and Canada.
 - 3) Developed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) (scientific community).
 - 4) Purpose is to collaborate on data collection and protect rare, threatened, and endangered species.
 - 5) Extended program to some foreign countries.
 - 6) Initially funded by The Nature Conservancy.
- The Nature Conservancy work.
 - 1) Primary role currently is in land management.
 - 2) Shares information between states.
- Nature Serve evolved from TNC.
 - 1) Does the research and inventory on rare, threatened, and endangered species.
 - 2) Collaborates data between states.
- Maryland Natural Heritage Program
 - 1) Leader in State's Listed Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE).
 - 2) In 1971, law passed for Maryland to create a list of rare, threatened and endangered species within the State.
 - 3) A total of 458 species of these plants and animals listed.
 - 4) Oversees conservation and management of protected and non-protected animals and plants.
 - 5) Involved in fourteen current conservation activities [Attachment A].
 - 6) There are eight funding sources:
 - (a) Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund represents about \$400,000.
 - (b) Total budget is 1.2 million dollars, with no single funding source dominating another.
- Regional Operations
 - 1) Tim Larney is the Regional Operations Manager.
 - 2) We have four regions that are identical to the WHS Regional Operations Program setup:
 - (a) Ed Thompson (Western Maryland)
 - (b) Dave Brinker (Central Maryland)
 - (c) Katherine McCarthy (Southern Maryland)
 - (d) Scott Smith (Eastern Maryland)
- Science Program
 - 1) Headed up by Dr. Gwenda Brewer.
 - 2) Manages the science program, which is statewide.
- Conservation Technology
 - 1) Headed up by Lynn Davidson.
 - 2) We have a volunteer coordinator to organize and keep our volunteers active and productive. We average 400 hours a month.
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Commissioner Adams stressed the need for broader funding base.

- 2) Mr. Glenn Therres agreed that stable federal funding would allow the Heritage Program to expand its efforts. Currently, obtaining funding for RTE species work is an annual process. He pointed out that Pittman-Robertson Fund is restricted to birds and mammals; however, most RTE species are reptiles, amphibians, plants, and insects.

Legislative Concepts Finalized

- Presentation by Bob Beyer, Larry Hindman, and Robert Colona
- Waterfowl Outfitter and Professional Hunting Guide Statues and Regulations [Attachment B]
 - 1) To amend the existing Master Hunting Guide statue and to establish new regulation to limit commercial waterfowl hunting activities to ensure that commercial hunting does not reach the levels of the 70's and 80's
 - 2) Two types of sport licenses for persons participating in commercial waterfowl hunting
 - (a) A waterfowl outfitter license
 - (b) A professional waterfowl hunting guide license
 - 3) Would establish fees
 - (a) Waterfowl Outfitter License for the fee of \$500.00
 - (b) Waterfowl Hunting Guide for the fee of \$100.00
 - 4) Give authority to Department of Natural Resources to establish regulations for waterfowl hunting.
 - 5) Establish age requirement
 - 6) Certification
 - (a) US Coast Guard Captain License
 - (b) First Aid Certification
 - 7) Limit the number of guides (10) that can be employed.
- A key part of this will be grounds for mandatory license revocation (Attachment B number 5), which would prohibit the guide from participating.
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Discussion ensued regarding commercial goose hunting and its impact on the species.
 - 2) Commissioner Freeland asked how The Waterfowl Outfitter and Professional Hunting Guide legislative proposal effects farmers who lease their property to hunter would.
 - (a) If the farmer was paid directly from the particular hunter(s), then the farmer would need an outfitter license.
 - (b) If an individual leases the entire farm property, then that individual would need the outfitter license.

Furbearer License

- Presentation by Robert Colona
- History:
 - 1) The Fur Resource Advisory Committee (FRAC) developed "fur user" license concept four years ago. A Legislative packet was developed.
 - 2) The intended purpose:
 - (a) Sampling base would provide us with the scientific tools to manage the fur resources.
 - (b) Require mandatory education courses for trappers and fox chaser. The Fur User Groups will serve as instructors.
 - 3) They developed a legislative packet, which had a sponsor; however the bill was never introduced. Amended version of the fur users' packet was introduced at the 2001 legislative session. The bill died in committee.
- Members of FRAC who opposed the amended legislation, are now hesitant to reintroduce this packet.
 - 1) Fox Chasers plan to meet in October.
 - 2) The Trappers Organization will follow the lead of the Fox Chasers.
- Mr. Robert Colona stated that if the FRAC members developed a mutual agreeable packet, they want the Department's support and promise to oppose any amendments.
- Best Management Practice (BMP)
 - 1) Mr. Colona noted that Phase One of an international study of BMP for trapping furbearers is complete.

State Forest and State Park Service Update

- Mr. Bob Beckett, Chief Management of State Forest and Park Service (SFPS) presented SFSP update.
- SFSP has started inventory and assessment of Old Growth on SFSP lands.
 - 1) Assisting are Wildlife and Heritage Service, Forestry Service, and outside experts.
 - 2) This report will help with the Ten Year Management Plan.
 - 3) Fifty percent of land areas are off limits to timber.
 - 4) We need clarity on where timbering is currently allowed.
 - 5) The definition of Old Growth will determine the Ten Year Management Plan.
- Maryland Native Plant Society
 - 1) The first step was to introduce Secretary Fox to the issues and problems on land-based invasive plants.
 - 2) The second step will be to begin to control invasive plants on public lands. Need to prioritize their projects.
 - 3) SFPS will keep the Commission informed.
- Questions and Answers
 - 1) Mr. Hotton expressed concern about removing some invasive plants, particularly Japanese Honey Suckle (main deer diet).
 - 2) Mr. Therres added that the Natural Heritage Program is taking the lead on Old Growth inventory for the State.

Natural Resources Police Update

- Sergeant Scott Richardson handed out May Monthly report [Attachment C].

MSA Update

- No report

Maryland Farm Bureau

- No report

Old Business

- Commissioners agreed to discuss Non-Lethal Task Force at the August meeting.

New Business

- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), a disease of white-tailed deer, has been reported east of the Mississippi.
 - 1) Our concern is that Pennsylvania has one of the highest rates of captive cervids. If this disease enters Pennsylvania, Maryland will be seriously affected.
 - 2) Wildlife and Heritage Service has staff appointed to monitor this issue.
- Black Bear Response staff is working non-stop with bear problems, which have been seen eastward as far as Frederick County.
- Finalized regulations have been posted in the Maryland Registry.
- Do not expect a change in the bag limits for AP Canada Geese due to poor nesting season and heavy snow.
- Mute Swans
 - 1) We were able to treat about 230 nests and over 1,200 eggs, which included 68% of the mapped Mute Swan nests.
 - 2) We credited this to the good press coverage and public assistance.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

Attendance

Members:	T. Lambert, C. Dollar, W. Freeland, R. Gregory, M. King, J. Lamp, C. Garner, L. Adams, K. Jones
Guests:	R. Ferrari
Staff:	B. Beckett, B. Beyer, G. Brewer, S. Bittner, R. Colona, B. Eyler, L. Hindman, M. Hoffman, D. Hotton, P. Jayne, P. Peditto, S. Richardson, T. Spencer, G. Therres, L. Wiley
Absent:	G. Fratz